

And it would be a tragedy if it were derailed. But in order to keep it going, everybody's going to have to honor the terms of the agreement. And so we're working on that now, and I think that's all I should say now.

India-U.S. Relations

Q. And on India?

The President. I'm going because it's the biggest democracy in the world, and I think we haven't been working with them enough. Just as I believe we have to engage China that has a political system very different from ours, we have to engage India that makes decisions sometimes we don't agree with, but is a great democracy that has preserved their democracy. I must say, against enormous odds. And we have an enormous common interest in shaping the future with them, and I'm looking forward to it.

I think it's unfortunate that the United States has been estranged, or if not estranged, at least it's had a distant relationship with the Indians for too long.

New Hampshire Primaries

Q. Who's going to win the primaries?

Q. What about the primary? What would you tell New Hampshire voters today?

Q. Any predictions?

The President. I don't need to tell them anything, because one of the things about New Hampshire voters is, they all make up their own mind after an exhaustive inquiry. If there's any place in the world where people are actually well prepared to make their own decisions, it's there.

It's a wonderful place, you know. Of course, I love it. They've been very good to me. But it's a great system. I know some people say, well, it's not totally representative of the rest of the country. But, you know, I think people running for office—the Speaker and I were talking about this at the beginning—people running for offices like ours that have millions and millions of constituents shouldn't be able to get there just over, with all respect, television and the mass media. They ought to have to go out and sit down with people in their homes, in their coffee shops, in their places of business, and let them ask questions and talk to them, and be sized up.

I think it is a great exercise. And I've enjoyed watching it unfold for the first time in three elections where I'm not involved. But it's really been quite wonderful.

Q. Who's going to win? [Laughter]

The President. They'll decide that tonight.

Q. Did you talk to the Vice President? Did you talk to the Vice President?

The President. I haven't talked to him in the last 48 hours. But I talk to him, you know, frequently. I haven't talked to him in the last 48 hours. But I've talked to others associated with the campaign. They're all up there working hard. That's all you can do up there. Nobody knows how the people of New Hampshire are going to vote. You've just got to go up there and work your heart out and hope it comes out.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:44 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams; and Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Videotape Address to the People of Puerto Rico on Efforts To Resolve the Impasse Over Vieques Island

February 1, 2000

My fellow citizens, last April there was a tragic accident at the Navy range on Vieques. I deeply regret the loss to the family of David Sanes and the suffering of others injured on that day.

That accident focused attention on the longstanding concerns of the island about training operations there. It led to a strong view in the Commonwealth that the Navy should end its training on Vieques. I understand why many people feel that way.

At the same time, as Commander in Chief, I must do all I can to ensure that our service men and women get the very best training possible. I know you understand that. Many Puerto Ricans have served with real distinction in our Armed Forces. You have never turned your back on your duty to share in the defense of our country.

For more than 50 years, Vieques has been a central part of our training for the Atlantic Fleet. The reason this is such a difficult issue is because right now there are no alternative sites that provide the same combined training opportunities.

For the past 9 months, we've been working closely with Governor Rossello, and Resident Commissioner Romero-Barcelo to find a solution that meets our training needs and addresses fairly the concerns of the people of Vieques. Today I'm announcing a course of action that will give the people of Vieques themselves the right to determine the future of the island, while, at the same time, assuring that our training needs are met.

Between later this year and early 2002, the people of Vieques will vote. In that vote, the people of Vieques will be asked to choose between two alternatives. If they choose the first alternative, the Navy will cease all training on Vieques and leave the island by May 1, 2003. If they choose the other alternative, training will continue on Vieques on terms that will be presented in detail at least 3 months before the vote.

I believe this is the best way to resolve the impasse over Vieques because it gives the people most affected by this decision, the people who actually live on the island, the right to determine for themselves which course of action we should take. In the meantime, until that vote is held, we're taking several other steps to ensure that our service men and women get the training they need, while addressing the needs of Vieques.

First, during the period leading up to the vote, I am ordering the training done on Vieques will be limited to nonexplosive ordnance, meaning there will be no live fire. I am also directing the Navy and Marine Corps to cut in half the amount of time they will spend training. In 1998 our troops trained for 182 days on Vieques; this year they will be authorized for 90 days.

Second, to address the problems caused by past training, we will implement measures to meet the health, safety, environmental, and economic concerns of the people of Vieques. Measures we will implement include positioning Navy ships to reduce noise; development of a new ferry pier and terminal; creating a new commercial fishing

area; temporary compensation for fishermen; expanding and improving roads; a bioluminescent bay preservation program; a job-training program for young people; providing land to extend the airport runway; and a public health service study.

Third, I will also ask Congress to begin transferring title to land on the western quarter of the island to Puerto Rico.

In the event that the residents of Vieques vote to continue training on the island, in recognition of the burden such training places on the community, we will increase the investment we make to meet infrastructure and development needs. In the event that they vote for an end to training, we will dispose of the land through the normal Federal process.

To make this solution work, I need your help. I understand the deeply held views people have on this issue. I understand that for many residents the accident exacerbated old wounds about the effect the training was having on your quality of life. They reflect a distrust that, unfortunately, has been building for decades.

As a Defense Department panel found, we have not always been good neighbors on Vieques. But I believe this plan will help resolve the impasse over Vieques in the fairest possible way, because it gives the people most affected by the decision the ability to choose for themselves what the future of their island will be.

I hope I can count on the cooperation of all the people of Puerto Rico to implement the measure I have outlined, to allow the training of our troops to continue in a responsible and much more limited manner during this period, while addressing the long time concerns of the residents of La Isla Nena.

I want to thank Governor Rossello for his unceasing effort to work out a resolution to this difficult impasse. Puerto Ricans and the people of Vieques have contributed greatly to our Nation's security; I am very grateful for that. And I hope all of us can work together with our Congress and with the government and Governor of Puerto Rico to implement this plan.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President's remarks were videotaped at approximately 6:15 p.m. on January 31 in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 1 but was embargoed for release until 5 p.m. In his remarks, the President referred to Governor Pedro Rossello and Resident Commissioner Carlos A. Romero-Barcelo of Puerto Rico. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this address.

Statement on the Crash of Alaska Airlines Flight 261

February 1, 2000

In times of tragedy, the American people pull together as one and offer their prayers and solace to those in need. Today our Nation prays for the men and women who were aboard Alaska Airlines flight 261, and for their families and friends.

Since last evening, the United States Coast Guard has been on the scene engaged in search and rescue operations. The National Transportation Safety Board's Go Team arrives this morning and a joint command center is being established at the Port Hueneme Naval Center.

Underlying all these efforts is a strong and heroic determination to save lives and to find out exactly what went wrong, so that lives can be saved in the future. Throughout this difficult day, and in the days and weeks to come, we will keep the passengers and crew of flight 261 in our thoughts, and let us hope that God's mercy will shine on them and their families.

Statement on Export Controls on High-Performance Computers and Semiconductors

February 1, 2000

In July, 1999, I announced reforms to the administration's export controls on high-performance computers (HPC) and semiconductors that were intended to strengthen America's high-tech competitiveness and maintain controls necessary to protect our national security. At that time, I directed my national security and economic advisers to review HPC technology advancement every

6 months, and to provide me with recommendations to adjust our HPC export controls if warranted.

Today, based on the recommendations I have received from agencies as a result of their review, I am announcing additional reforms to U.S. export controls on HPC's. This decision reflects my commitment to a control system that will enhance U.S. national security by implementing controls on computer exports that are effective and enforceable.

I have decided to raise the licensing threshold for HPC exports to Tier 2 countries. I have decided also to raise the licensing threshold for Tier 3 countries and the threshold above which proposed exports to Tier 3 countries must be notified to U.S. Government export control agencies, and to adjust the Tier 3 country grouping. The administration will continue its policy of maintaining a lower threshold for military end-users that civilian end-users. Export control agencies will examine the benefits of maintaining a civil/military differential in the course of their next review of HPC levels. Due to the ever-increasing rate of technological change, agencies will review control levels by April, 2000, to determine if further changes are warranted.

The changes to the pre-export notification threshold and the Tier 3 country group require congressional review period of 6 and 4 months, respectively, before they can go into effect. I will continue to work with the Congress to pass legislation that would reduce these periods to one month, so that we can keep up with the rapid pace of technological change. I also will work with Congress to explore longer-term solutions to how we control exports of items like computers and microprocessors when they become widely available commodities.

Message on the Observance of Lunar New Year, 2000

February 2, 2000

Warm greetings to all those celebrating the Lunar New Year. I am delighted to join you in welcoming 4698, the Year of the Dragon.

This ancient and joyous festival, marked by parades, dancing, music, and feasting,